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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2900
INFO RUCNCLS/SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 0368

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 000924

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/24/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: IAN MARTIN BRIEFS SECURITY COUNCIL ON NEPAL

Classified By: AMBASSADOR ALEX WOLFF, FOR REASONS 1.4 B/D

11. (C) Summary: During an October 25 update for the Security Council, Ian Martin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the UN Mission in Nepal

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(UNMIN), told Council members that the recent postponement of Constitutional Assembly elections had thrust Nepal into "the most critical and dangerous" moment of its peace process. In response to questions, Martin stated that UNMIN,s limited mandate did not allow the UN to engage on the root causes of Nepal,s political turmoil. Member states were unanimous in expressing their disappointment regarding the postponement of elections. There were varying degrees of willingness by members to consider expanding UNMIN,s mandate, but all accepted the need for renewal when its mandate expires in January. Separately, the Indian mission told USUN that India accepts that the elections delay means that UNMIN,s mandate will need to be renewed, but firmly rejects the prospect of any expansion before the holding of elections. The Indian PermRep also expressed concern over what he deemed was a soft line by Martin towards the Maoists. End summary.

BRIEFING THE SECURITY COUNCIL

12. (SBU) Martin presented the Council with a political update focusing on the second postponement of Constituent Assembly elections. He opined that a realistic new date would be in the early spring, attributing the delay in part to weather. Although there have been many breaches of the agreements signed between the government and Maoists, Martin said there have not been any incidents between the two armies. However, he warned that the cantonment of Maoists was a temporary measure, and the longer their situation remained unsettled, the greater the chance of a breakdown in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Martin highlighted the major challenges facing Nepal: a general failure by both parties to implement commitments, a growing climate of distrust among the political parties, a demoralized and weak police force, and the demands of traditionally marginalized groups, including in the Terai region.

13. (SBU) In the face of these pressing issues, Martin said that the Nepalese have high expectations for the UN,s role, despite its limited mandate. He said PM Koirala and other political leaders support a renewal of UNMIN,s mandate. Martin added that civil society groups, some political leaders and some Council members support an expansion of UNMIN,s mandate as follows: 1) a greater role in encouraging the implementation of commitments made by all sides; 2) a greater focus on security sector reform; and 3) advising Nepal on security for the elections period.

14. (SBU) In response to Martin's presentation, all Council members expressed disappointment with the postponement of elections, and called on Nepalese political leaders to make

the difficult decisions necessary to proceed to elections. The UK, Belgium, France and Italy all expressed explicit support for an expansion of UNMIN,s mandate. China and Russia noted Martin,s call to expand the mandate, and said they would carefully consider what had been said. Both emphasized that they would look to the Nepalese government to officially request an extension of the UNMIN mandate and to request an expansion, if so desired. The Council "must respect Nepal,s will," concluded the Chinese PermRep. Ambassador Khalilzad expressed U.S. concern regarding postponement of the elections, and urged members to consider contributing to democracy promotion efforts within Nepal.

INDIANS CONCERNED ABOUT UNMIN, SRSG MARTIN

15. (C) Separately, in advance of the Council discussion of the situation in Nepal, Ambassadors Khalilzad and Wolff were approached by the Indian PermRep. The Indian PermRep emphasized that India did not support an expansion of the UN mandate, and expressed concern about India's view that Martin is not being sufficiently forceful in insisting to the Nepalese that the elections be held on schedule. He alleged that India believes Martin is "too soft" with the Maoists. Indian Political Counselor Vikram Doraiswami told Poloff that India might be amenable to an expanded or refocused UNMIN mandate, but is only prepared to consider such a change after elections take place. They fear that an expansion of the UNMIN mandate at this juncture would decrease the pressure on the Nepalese political parties to hold elections. The Nepalese PermRep also told Ambassador Wolff that Nepal would support a renewal but was not seeking an expansion of the UNMIN mandate. The Indian mission is also conveying this message to other Council delegations. Khalilzad